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Agenda item 8

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Hisham ELZIMAITY (Egypt)

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 3. Peace-keeping operations and special missions

1. At its 26th and 27th meetings, on 5 June, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered section 3, Peace-keeping operations and special missions, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. Many delegations welcomed the reorganization of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and considered that it should improve the Department's capacity to meet the challenges facing it. Many delegations welcomed the streamlining of the support units for peace-keeping under the Field Administration and Logistics Division and stressed the importance of further improving the quality of services provided to troop-contributing countries, mainly in the areas of logistics and personnel. Many delegations stressed the difficulties encountered by troop-contributing countries, especially with regard to deaths and disability claims, troop reimbursement costs and related matters. Some delegations further emphasized the importance of mitigating, if not completely eliminating, the problems of troop- and equipment-contributing countries, as well as the problems relating to death and disability claims.

3. Many delegations emphasized the importance of effective public information support activities as a component of peace-keeping operations and felt that a mission information unit to backstop such field activities should have been included in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. Many other delegations said that no legislative mandate existed for the establishment of a mission information unit within the Department and underlined their support for the decision of the Secretary-General not to include a mission information unit in the budget proposal for the Department.

4. Many delegations supported the Secretary-General's proposal to transfer posts from the support account for peace-keeping operations to the regular budget as an appropriate reflection of the increase in the Department's core activities. Many other delegations regretted the Secretary-General's proposed transfer of posts, despite the debate on the matter in the General Assembly, and expressed opposition to the proposal as there was no specific legislative mandate in this respect. One delegation hoped there would be a clear decision on this issue at the next resumed session of the General Assembly. Another delegation suggested that the issue could be resolved during the General Assembly's consideration of the proposed programme budget.

5. Some delegations felt that the Secretary-General should have included financial provision in the proposed programme budget for unforeseen ad hoc missions, at a level commensurate with the requirements for such missions in the recent past. The representative of the Secretary-General recalled in this connection that, in his proposals for the programme budget outline for 1994-1995 (A/47/358), the Secretary-General had included such a financial provision. In its related report (A/47/7/Add.9), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had recommended against the proposal, since, by their very nature, those activities were generally unpredictable and the experience gained in one biennium was not necessarily an indication of what would be encountered in the next. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee believed that the General Assembly, in its resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses, had adequately provided for any unexpected activity. The Assembly had accepted this recommendation. It was on that basis that the Secretary-General had not included a similar proposal in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Conclusions and recommendations

6. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 3, Peace-keeping operations and special missions, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.